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MAYOR



METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY

Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission
Sunnyside in Sevier Park
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Nashville, Tennessee 37204
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STAFF RECOMMENDATION
1101 Sixth Avenue North/601 Madison Avenue
(Elliott School)
July 21, 2021

Application: Addition (Revisions to Previously Approved Plans)
District: Germantown Historic Preservation Zoning Overlay
Council District: 19
Map and Parcel Number: 08213038600
Applicant: Manuel Zeitlin
Project Lead: Melissa Baldock, melissa.baldock@nashville.gov

Description of Project: The applicant requests revisions to the rooftop additions previously approved under preservation permit #201626013. The revisions have already been constructed.

Recommendation Summary: Staff recommends approval of the project with the condition that all rooftop features be painted a dark grey or black color. With this condition, staff finds that the project meets the design guidelines for the Germantown Historic Preservation Zoning Overlay.

Attachments
A: Site Plan
B: Elevations

Vicinity Map:



Aerial Map:



Applicable Design Guidelines:

Guidelines in effect when permit was issued in 2016.

4.0 Additions

An ADDITION consists of an extension to an existing structure that increases the floor area or height of that structure.

4.1 General Principles

4.1.1 Guidelines apply only to the exteriors of new additions. Public facades shall be more carefully reviewed than non-public facades. *Public facades are those that are visible from the public right of way, street or streets – Generally facades facing the alley are not considered public facades. Non-public facades are those not visible from the public right of way, street or streets.*

4.1.2 The guidelines for Section 2 New Construction shall apply to all additions.

4.2 Additions to Historic Buildings

4.2.1 Additions should not obscure or contribute to the loss of historic character-defining features or materials.

4.2.2. Additions to existing historic buildings shall be compatible in scale, materials and texture; additions shall be visually compatible by not contrasting greatly with the existing historic building. Additions to historic buildings should be done in such a manner that, if such additions were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the original structure would not be impaired.

4.2.3 Generally, an addition should be situated at the rear of a building in such a way that it will not disturb either front or side facades. To distinguish between the historic structure and an addition, it is desirable to set the addition in from the building side wall or for the addition to have a different exterior cladding.

4.2.4 The creation of an addition through enclosure of a front porch is not permitted. The creation of an addition through the enclosure of a side porch may be appropriate if the addition is constructed in such a way that the original form and openings on the porch remain visible and undisturbed.

4.2.5 contemporary designs for additions to existing historic properties may be permitted when such additions do not destroy significant historical, architectural, or cultural material; and when such design is compatible, by not contrasting greatly, with the size, scale, material color, material, and character of the property, neighborhood, or environment.

Current Germantown Design Guidelines

V. NEW CONSTRUCTION—ADDITIONS

3. Placement

b. Rooftop additions (not including dormers) are generally not appropriate for historic buildings. A minimal rooftop access, just large enough to accommodate a stair and that is not visible from a public right-of-way may be appropriate for flat roof historic buildings that are more than 1-story and 9'

8. Roof

- a. The roofs of new buildings should be visually compatible by not contrasting significantly with the roof shape, pitch, and orientation of surrounding buildings. See Building Type descriptions.
- b. Roof-top equipment, skylights, and roof penetrations located on or attached to the roof shall be located so as to minimize their visibility from the street. Typically screening does not meet the requirement for “minimal visibility” as it often alters the look and perceived height of a building.

Generally, rooftop equipment should be placed behind the mid-point of the building. (For solar panels, please see “utilities.”)

9. Rooftop Decks

- a. Rooftop decks (flooring, railing and access structure) shall not be added to historic buildings.
- b. Rooftop decks are not appropriate on new construction within the National Register Development Zones but may be appropriate in other Development Zones.
- c. Rooftop decks are not appropriate for single-story new-construction.
- d. Where Rooftop decks are appropriate:
 - They should not cantilever or project from the building.
 - The lighting of roof decks should point inward and downward and not be located more than 42” above the deck. The access structure shall not be illuminated, other than safety lighting near the entrance.
 - No rooftop deck may be raised more than two feet (2') above the plane that is midway between the lowest and the highest points of the roof surface supporting the rooftop deck.
 - A rooftop deck should sit back from the front wall of the building by at least 8’ for a flat roof and 6’ behind the ridgeline for a gabled roof or mansard roof. It should sit back a minimum of 5’ from the side street-facing wall in the case of corner buildings.
- h. Mechanicals or other elements shall not be located on top of a rooftop access structure.
- i. Roof decks shall not have outside A/V equipment (for instance televisions and speakers but not including small security cameras), flags, signage, permanently installed structures such as pergolas, other than the access structure, or permanently installed furniture and appurtenances.
- j. Access structures may only serve to enclose a single-door access, stair or elevator. Access structures should have flat or slight slope roofs and not exceed 9’ in height. The 9’ may be in addition to the maximum height allowed based on context, if the rooftop access structure is positioned in a minimally visible location.

Background: The Elliott School is located at 1101 Sixth Avenue North, between Jefferson and Madison Streets. It was constructed in 1916, and is a contributing structure to the Germantown Historic Preservation Zoning Overlay (Figures 1-3). Historic Nashville, Inc. (HNI) holds a façade easement for the structure.



Figure 1. The Sixth Avenue North façade of the Elliott School, photo taken in 2016.



Figure 2 (left) is the Madison Street façade of the school and Figure 3 (right) is the Jefferson Street façade. Photos taken in 2016.

In 2016, MHZC approved plans to renovate the historic school building and convert it to residential apartments. The plans included rooftop additions. In 2018, the applicant hosted a meeting with representatives from MHZC, HNI, the Tennessee Historical Commission, and the neighborhood organization to discuss potential changes and alterations to the configuration of the rooftop additions. However, MHZC staff never received a submission of drawings showing these proposed changes. Such changes would have had to have gone to the Metro Historic Zoning Commission because they were substantially different than what had been approved previously.

In June 2021, MHZC staff discovered that the rooftop addition was built per the 2018 revisions, which had not been approved by MHZC, instead of per the 2016 MHZC permit.

Analysis and Findings: The applicant requests revisions to the rooftop additions previously approved under preservation permit #201626013. The revisions have already been constructed.

Rooftop Additions: When the Commission originally reviewed the rooftop additions in 2016, the design guidelines for Germantown did not contain any language for rooftop additions. At that time, the Commission found that the proposed rooftop additions met the design guidelines. In 2017, the Commission adopted revised design guidelines however, staff used the old design guidelines since this addition started with the old design guidelines.

Both the previously approved plan and the revised plan include a main rooftop enclosed area with habitable space and several stair bulkhead towers. The previously approved roof plan shows that the habitable rooftop addition would be in the middle of the roof, but pushed to the rear of the building. It had a footprint of over two thousand, three hundred square feet (2,300 sq. ft.) (Figure 4). The revised plans show a much smaller habitable rooftop addition with a footprint of approximately five hundred and fifty square feet (550 sq. ft.) (Figure 5). However this revised plan shows the smaller habitable rooftop addition to be pushed up closer to both 6th Avenue North and Madison Street. It is drawn to be approximately twenty-five feet (25') back from the Madison Street façade and seventeen feet (17') from the 6th Avenue North façade.

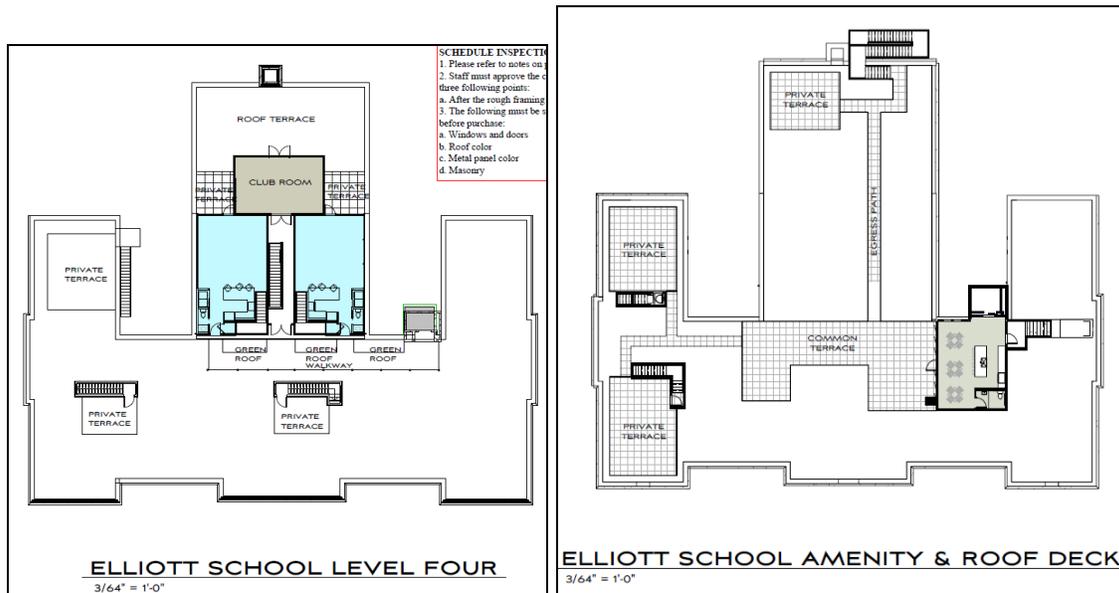


Figure 4 (left) is the roof plan approved in 2016 and Figure 5 (right) is the proposed roof plan.

The rooftop addition with habitable space did increase slightly in height between the 2016 approved plans. In 2016, the habitable rooftop addition was approximately ten feet (10') taller than the parapet as seen on the 6th Avenue North elevation (Figure 6). The proposed revisions show that the height of the addition above the parapet along 6th Avenue North has increased to being approximately eleven feet, ten inches (11'10") tall at its tallest point (Figures 7 & 8). Staff finds that this increase to be appropriate because overall the footprint of the habitable rooftop addition has significantly decreased and is one-fourth the size it was in the 2016 approval. Staff recommends that this part of the rooftop addition be painted a dark color like the stair bulkheads so as to minimize its visibility.



Figure 6. The 2016 approved plans for the 6th Avenue North façade.



Figure 7. The proposed revisions to the 6th Avenue North façade.



Figure 8. View of the habitable rooftop addition from 6th Avenue North.

Although the stair bulkhead locations changed from the approved 2016 plans to the proposed revisions, staff finds that proposed stair towers closer to the Jefferson Street façade are appropriate because they are small in footprint; one is just about sixty square feet (60 sq. ft.) and the other is approximately one hundred and ten square feet (110 sq. ft.). They extend approximately eleven feet, seven inches (11'7") above the parapet (Figures 9 & 10). They are similar in size in scale to what was approved in 2016.

The rooftop railings are most visible from across Jefferson Street, which is a particularly wide thoroughfare. Although visible, staff finds that the railings have a utilitarian and simple design that is open in nature. Staff finds that they do not distract from the historic character of the school and are appropriate.



Figure 9. View of the stair bulkheads from across Jefferson Street.



Figure 10. View of the stair bulkheads from across Jefferson Street.

The applicant also proposes a stair bulkheads facing the Madison Street façade which are different than what was previously approved (Figures 11 & 12). Part of the stair bulkhead on the right side of the Madison Street façade will be approximately fifteen feet, ten inches (15'10") tall at its tallest point. However, this tallest portion is just about eight feet (8') wide and is setback thirty feet (30') from the parapet. Staff therefore finds it to be appropriate.

The most visible part of the rooftop addition on the Madison Street façade is the slanted stairway bulkhead. This stairway is only set back approximately seven feet (7') from the parapet and it slants up to have a resulting height of approximately eleven feet (11'). This portion of the addition is currently white in color, which makes it stand out more than the areas that are painted a dark grey/black color. Staff finds that if the slanted stair bulkhead and the narrower bulkhead next to it are painted a dark color, they would read as utilitarian rooftop intrusions that do not detrimentally affect the historic character of the historic school structure. Also, currently, these elements are highly visible at 5th Avenue and Madison Street because there is a vacant lot. MHZC has approved townhouses for these lots as part of this larger Elliott School project. Once these townhouses are constructed, the view of this slanted stair bulkhead will not disappear entirely, but it will be diminished substantially. Staff therefore finds that if all rooftop intrusions are painted a dark grey or black color, they are appropriate for the historic school structure.

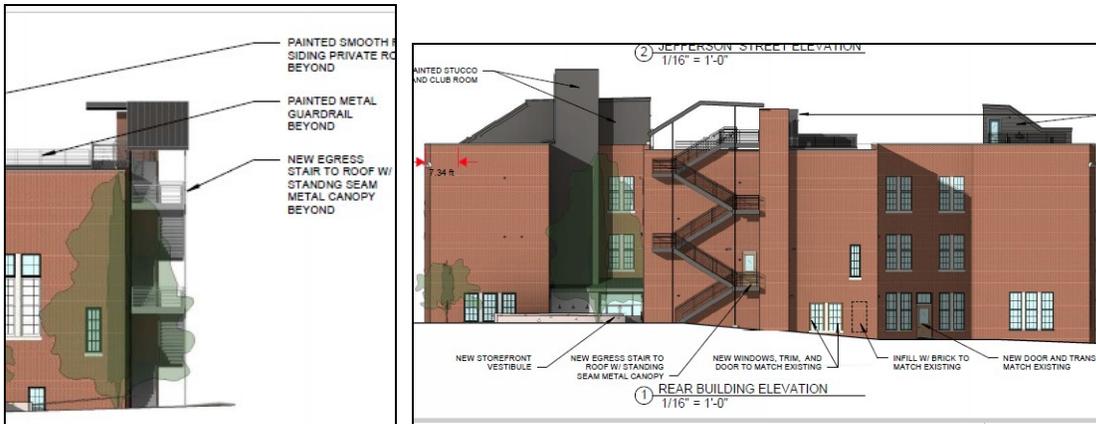


Figure 11. The view of the Madison Street bulkheads from a vacant lot at Madison Street and 5th Avenue North. Once the townhouses are built on this lot, this view will not be possible.



Figure 12. The view of the Madison Street bulkheads from 5th Avenue North just north of Madison Street. This view will be obscured once the townhouses at the corner of 5th Avenue North and Madison Street are constructed.

Lastly, the revised plans include a metal stair and roof cover at the rear of the historic school (Figure 13, 14, 15, 16). Staff finds that these metal stairs which are necessary for fire egress are appropriate to the historic structure because they are located on the rear façade, which has a utilitarian design that is not ornamented like the other three façades. The new exterior stair will not interfere with any historic architectural features and will have a utilitarian design that will not detract from the overall historic architecture of the school.



Figures 13 & 14 show the metal stair located on the school’s rear façade.



Figures 15 & 16 are photos of the metal stair from Madison Street.

The materials of the rooftop intrusions are similar to what was approved in the 2016 permit. They are a mixture of stucco and metal panels. With the condition that all of the rooftop intrusions be a dark grey or black color, staff finds that they meet the design guidelines.

Recommendation Summary: Staff recommends approval of the project with the condition that all rooftop features be painted a dark grey or black color. With this condition, staff finds that the project meets the design guidelines for the Germantown Historic Preservation Zoning Overlay.